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## Breaking the Chain

OC OC

It's been a few generations since the humans joined the wider group of sapients of the galaxy, and among the many previously thought "laws" of species development they've upended, none are more significant than their breaking of the so-called Chain of Self-Civilizing.

Initially proposed by a long-dead xenoarcheosociologist, the proposed Chain says that certain benchmarks must first be met before a proper war can take place. To have a war, you have to have a group capable of gathering the required resources & people to wage it. To have a group capable, they should necessarily need to support the group in the first place, which means agriculture of crops and/or domestication of livestock depending on the diet. And interspersed through these steps are some form of energy harvesting, be it fire, gravity, or electricity, and some sort of intoxicant. If there's one thing most sapients can agree on, is thinking all the time & existence in general aren't fun all the time, and you have to take the edge off somehow. Each of these steps takes an exponentially shorter time to move to the next, since the benefits of all previous steps compound, with the first often taking millions of orbits to get to the second.

The first & oldest species, now translated as just Us/We, went the most so-called logical route: agriculture, booze, fire, civilization, then war. Their wars were infrequent and brief, no more than skirmishes compared to most others, and quickly saw the cause of war was scarcity and so expanded to the stars so they would never want for raw materials again.

As they expanded, they encountered other sapient life, and the pattern in general held true. Mixed around depending on the species in question, like how a carnivorous species would often find their intoxicant first with spoiled meats and fungus, then fire, then domestication, etc. A very small handful that experienced a cataclysm in their early pre-history were forced to make civilization & organization their priority to survive at all, then eventually harnessing agriculture and the rest. But all of these needed those initial Links of organization and sustainability before population growth and competition for resources necessitated the end of the Chain, the first war.

After the usual first contact hiccups were resolved was it truly realized that the humans had done things differently. Their world is fertile and vibrant with near a unheard-of diversity of life, while extremely hostile to all other parts of itself. The planet is still tectonically active, and life from the micro to the macro seeks nothing more than to consume and reproduce. As an extremely rare example of an omnivorous endurance hunter, humans never stayed in any one place for long and kept up subsistence hunter & gatherer lifestyles for at least a couple eons, eventually spreading to all corners of their world.

And they **started** the Chain with war. The small clans & families of early pre-history humanity warred with each other for food, space, resources, and mates, just because their world is so hostile. They domesticated and tamed some of the near-apex

predators of their world to hunt and fight with, before livestock. Their near-cousins evolutionarily, the other apes that have survived on their planet, also go to war for the same things. The humans warred with and out-competed the other early sapient branches of their evolutionary line. It is in their blood, etched into their very being.

And with figuring out how to wage war, then they indulged their intoxicans: overripe fruits, weird flowers, spoiled animal products, and fungi, all that either enhanced or impeded their central nervous system, just because it felt funny and different to those early humans; they earn the true title of Omnivore. Then they harnessed fire, only then! No doubt an accident at first by a stoned ape, undoubtedly those clans that could harness the wild carbon-oxygen flames used them to defeat their enemies and get better food. After untold millennia of strife & struggle did the humans finally notice that some plants came back time and again if you spread their seeds in the same area, that some animals were calm enough (relatively) to keep around, and decided to settle down.

But not all humans, those early settlements were raided by those who kept to their old ways, and it took external threats for those farms to finally come together in enough strength & numbers to meet the criteria for civilization. And even then, some of the oldest surviving records of those first human civilizations are of wars against other human cities. Wars have fueled their technological advancement and have wrought the most change over their histories, and they continue to wage an almost unceasing war against themselves to this day, some part against some other part. And they did it all in only two hundred thousand years to forge their whole Chain, not millions.

And that is why no one dares war with the humans. Compared to the rest, war is their oldest companion. And while they extend the open hand of friendship to all, never forget their other hand holds a very sharp rock on a very big stick.